

All quiet on the Lehigh front? (14)

The Bethlehem Gadfly Gadfly's posts, Lehigh University, Serious Issues December 20, 2018

(14th in a series of posts on Lehigh University)

Tim Hyland, "Lehigh Breaks Ground on Bridge West Residence Hall." Lehigh University News, December 19, 2018.

Jacqueline Palochko, "Lehigh University breaks ground on 720-bed dorm." Morning Call, December 19, 2018.

Gadfly hasn't posted on Lehigh for over a month. You may have forgotten the issue he's been watching out for. (Reminder that you can always catch up on earlier posts on topics through the menu under the image on the front page of the blog or under Topics on the sidebar).

Some recent and planned Lehigh new construction, like the one covered in this morning's articles, is on parking lots (120 approx spaces lost by this construction), forcing Lehigh to obtain parking from the Bethlehem Parking Authority across the river on the north side of town.

On the face of it, that's kind of bizarre — 3/4's of a mile from the closest, lowest edge of campus. But the issue Gadfly is concerned with is whether Lehigh's lowest class of worker will be forced to park there inconveniently (adding time to the work day, etc.) after testifying at 2 City hearings that their parking studies showed that they could accommodate all the lost parking on campus.

Gadfly has asked that Lehigh discuss the impact of their parking decisions on those workers before construction goes much further so that the City is aware that there might be a significant negative impact on workers who are City residents.

Gadfly thinks that the next major project is the College of Health described in the above articles as opening Fall 2020. Not too far away. So Gadfly assumes there will be presentations at City meetings soon.

- It has occurred to Gadfly that bouncing concerns off the Mayor's Southside Task Force might be a good idea, but he has not been able to work their meetings into his schedule. And he can't find contact info for chair Roger Hudak — if any followers can help with that, much appreciated.
- Gadfly filed Right to Know requests with the Parking Authority for leases on that "Northside Commuter Lot" and was told there were none. Strange. Maybe too early for leases? Just a verbal commitment now?
- Gadfly was curious about busing from the Northside lot (on Lehigh St., just west of the Fahey Bridge, adjacent to the Wooden Match). What size bus it would be and where it would stop on the Southside. Would, for instance, the bus go straight on New till stopping at Farrington Square? If so, where would it stop in that narrow stretch along the new building and garage between 3rd and 4th Sts. I could get no answer on that from the Transportation guy. No decision yet.
- Also, I wondered about the new bus loop (square?) from Morton to Adams to Mechanic to New to Morton. That will be a Transit-sized bus. Big. I wondered about it turning on some of those streets and where the stop would be. Sounds like the stop will be in the bus pull-off on Mechanic St. Gadfly worries a bit about the left turn from Mechanic onto New. We all have seen the awkwardness of the buses turning right there — trying to get into traffic with a wide turn and often jamming traffic. Getting across traffic with a big bus turning left looks like potential jamming too at times. But the Transportation guy said planning was not definite when I talked with him a month ago.

Are there any Gadfly followers with ears closer to the ground who have anything to add about what's going on? Is all quiet?